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DIVISION OF MENTAL RETARDATION SERVICES
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**For Immediate Release
October 1, 2008**

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Nashville's Harold Jordan Center Dismissed from State Lawsuit

Nashville – On Tuesday, U.S. District Court Judge Robert Echols dismissed the Harold Jordan Center from the lawsuit People First of Tennessee, et al. v. Clover Bottom Developmental Center, et al. The Harold Jordan Center, located on the Clover Bottom Developmental Center campus, is a facility for persons with mental retardation who have been charged with a crime. The state had petitioned the court for dismissal in June 2007.

The lawsuit originated in 1995 when the advocacy group People First of Tennessee and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) sued the state charging violations of the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act at Clover Bottom and Greene Valley Developmental Center in Greeneville. Another advocacy group, the Parent/Guardian Association (PGA), was subsequently allowed to intervene as a party in this action. Greene Valley was relieved of the part of the lawsuit regarding institutional conditions in 2006.

"This is an important achievement and the result of a lot of hard work by many persons," said Division of Mental Retardation Services Deputy Commissioner Stephen H. Norris. "The removal of Harold Jordan signifies the success of our procedures and programs. We are another step closer in bringing this lawsuit to resolution. Our focus continues on Clover Bottom compliance and we are committed to reaching that mark in the near future."

In its motion to dismiss Harold Jordan Center from the lawsuit, the state maintained it had demonstrated gains and maintenance of substantial compliance in the areas of institutional care and services, and protection from harm. Following extensive review of Harold Jordan, the DOJ and the PGA agreed that the center was in substantial compliance. People First, which had opposed, found agreement with the state last week and concurred release of the center was merited.

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